# · COLORADO RIVER ·

# AQUEDUCT NEWS

Vol. VI.

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT

AUGUST 25, 1939

No. 8

OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



District construction crews close in the last gap in the building of the main line of the Colorado River Aqueduct. Picture shows Casa Loma Siphon at West Portal of San Jacinto Tunnel.



306 WEST THIRD ST. LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Published monthly in the interest of Field and Office Workers on the Colorado River Aqueduct, and for the information of all other citizens of the Metropolitan Water District.

Vol. VI August 25, 1939 No. 8

## Main Aqueduct To Be Completed In Near Future

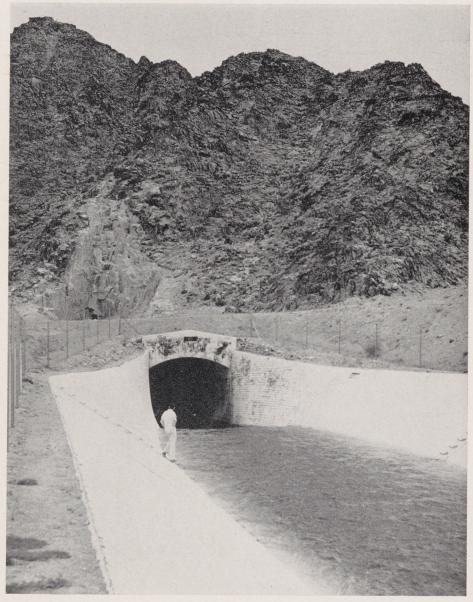
Sometime during the next few weeks, the last yard of concrete will be placed in the Casa Loma Siphon. That bucketful of concrete will be the last of more than four million cubic yards of concrete that has been placed in the main aqueduct. When that last yard of concrete has settled into place, the construction of the main aqueduct, from Lake Havasu to Cajalco Reservoir—242 miles to the west, will have been completed.

This last construction work will take place on the transition structure which will join the West Portal of San Jacinto Tunnel with the east end of Casa Loma Siphon. It is of particular interest that this last construction work will take place at the exact spot where Colorado River water will enter the coastal plain of Southern California.

Latest construction progress reports from General Superintendent B. C. Leadbetter state that the major part of the siphon work has already been finished. On August 25, the siphon barrel itself had been completed and partly backfilled and work was under way on the building of the transition structure between the siphon and tunnel. This structure is 55 feet long. At the time of the report, the excavation and placing of the concrete invert for the transition had been completed and the placing of reinforcement steel in the structure was approximately 50 per cent finished.

Back inside the San Jacinto tunnel itself, other M. W. D. crews were continuing their big job of clean-up work in making the 13-mile bore ready to carry water.

The tunnel progress report stated that all low pressure grouting work has now been finished and crews are concentrating on the last of the high pressure (Continued on Page 11)



Colorado River Aqueduct water entering transition structure at the east portal of the Coxcomb Tunnel

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#### SUPERINTENDENTS OF CONSTRUCTION PUMPING PLANTS

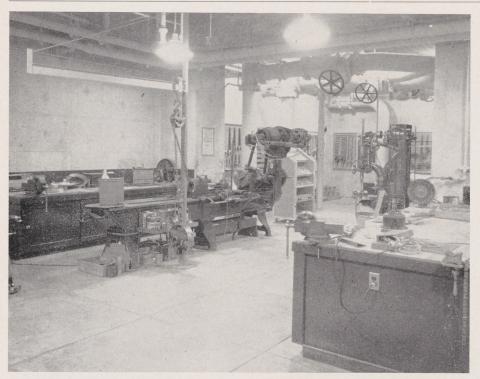
Intake and Gene...T. T. Walsh Iron Mt.......B. H. Martin Eagle Mt. and Hayfield...... G. E. Archibald

#### SUPERINTENDENTS (Main Aqueduct Tunnels) San Jacinto Tunnel, District Force Acct., B. C. Leadbetter, Gen. Supt.

Casa Loma Siphon Edwin Noon, Supt.

(Distribution Pipe Line) Schedules 24SC, 25SC, Emsco Derrick & Equipment Co. F. O. Mjellem, Shop Supt.; Hans Gude, Field Supt.

Schedules 26SC, 27SC, 28C, Western Pipe and Steel Co. C. P. Sanders, Gen. Supt.; S. S. Walker, Field Supt. Palos Verdes Reservoir, W. E. Hall Co.; W. E. Hall, Gen. Mgr.



An interior view of the machine shop at the Iron Mountain pumping plant. All of the aqueduct pumping plants are equipped with similar shops for making minor repairs and small pieces of equipment.

## District Tax Rate Set For 1939-1940

Limiting the tax rate of the Metropolitan Water District to an increase of but two cents over that of last year, despite the fact that large additional sums of money have been invested during the past year in completing the aqueduct, the District's Board of Directors on August 18 fixed a tax rate of 42 cents for the fiscal year 1939-1940.

The largest part of the District tax rate is required to meet interest charges on bonds sold to finance aqueduct construction work. The Board's action was taken on the recommendation of its finance committee headed by Director Victor H. Rossetti.

Up to the end of the past fiscal year, June 30, 1939, M.W.D. bond funds in the amount of \$161,000,000 had been invested in the water project. During the seven years that aqueduct construction has been under way, more than 35,000 men have been directly employed on the work and have received pay roll benefits amounting to \$58,000,000.

The Board's finance committee pointed out that aqueduct construction costs as a whole have been considerably less than the original estimates.

Cities in the District are not required

to meet their share of M.W.D. obligations from taxes. Each city may, if it chooses, make such payments from municipal utility revenues.

# Jesse Jones Praises District Board and Staff

Following his recent vacation in Los Angeles, Jesse H. Jones, Federal Loan Administrator, paid high tribute to the members of the District's Board of Directors and to the District's staff for their work in connection with the building of the aqueduct.

In a letter addressed to Chairman W. P. Whitsett, Mr. Jones stated:

"I believe I am in a position to evaluate the great service you have rendered the people of Southern California, of our generation and those to follow, in bringing to a successful fruition this outstanding project. It was no small undertaking, bringing water in such large quantities across deserts and under mountains, 243 miles. You have insured the future of Southern California, and may well be proud of having done it.

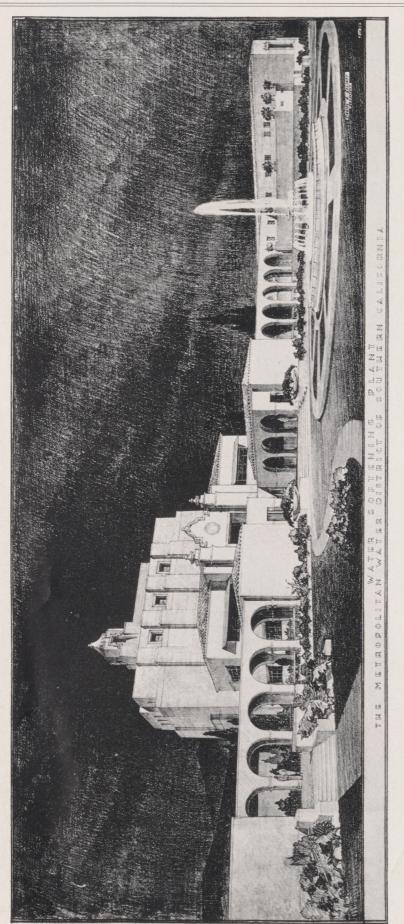
"It is worthy of note that there has been no breath of scandal in connection with the enterprise, its promotion, financing or administration.

"My associates and I feel that it has been a privilege to have had some part in this great achievement.

(Continued on Page 6)



Ventilating pipe from San Jacinto tunnel has been sold for scrap, and to decrease cost of hauling is being flattened into thin strips as shown in the picture.



KHITTER WASH

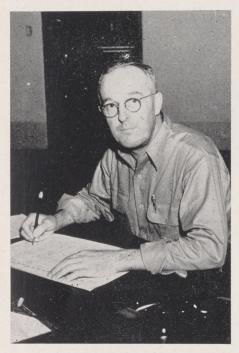
Above is an architect's sketch, prepared by M.W.D. architect Dan Elliott, of the water softening and filtering plant to be built by the District and for which Specifications No. 312 will be issued on August 31. At the right is a tentaive plot plan showing the general layout of buildings and water softening and filtering equipment. A brief description of the operation of this plant was published in the March 25, 1939, issue of the NEWS.

The tower on the rear building, see sketch, contains a water tank for domestic water used in the plant and its top is approximately 120 feet above the ground. This part of the plant is known as the "head house" and will contain bins, conveyors, controls, etc. The administration building, in front, will contain laboratories, offices, and a demonstration class room. The buildings will be constructed of concrete and will have mission tile roofs. The architectural style is described as modified Spanish colonial.



Boating through the Coxcomb. No. 1, A look at the white water in the transition; No. 2, Look out for that first dip, it's a honey; No. 3, Man the life-preservers, we're scuppered; No 4, End of the line, all out; No. 5, Oh, well, it was hot anyhoo; No. 6, Oh, boy, it looks dark in there; No. 7, Hey—catch this rope—they aint no brakes on this tub; No. 8, All done. M. W. D. and C. B. S. crews after broadcast on August 13.

# NEWS FROM FIELD AND OFFICE



A. E. "Al" Geisler, Dispatcher at the Iron Mountain Pumping Plant. "Al" started to work for the M. W. D. in the Operating Division in 1933. He's married, has three sons and a daughter.

Since the last issue of the NEWS went to press, a number of old-timers on the aqueduct have resigned from the District to take other positions. Included in this group are the following, all of whom are well known in the field and office:

H. G. "Harry" Matthews who was, in point of service, one of the very-very old-timers. Harry was first employed in Beaumont on the Colorado River Aqueduct surveys being conducted by the City of Los Angeles, and he started work way back in the dim past—the date being August 22, 1925. After the beginning of aqueduct construction work, Harry spent a number of years on the main aqueduct, was later transferred to Cajalco Reservoir, and at the time he left the District, August 19, 1939, he had been for a number of months in the Los Angeles office of the Distribution Division. Harry's new position is as an engineer with the U.S. Engineers on the construction of the Prado Dam in Orange County.

Simon "Si" Perliter of the Design Division, another ancient one in terms of service, resigned from the District in the latter part of August to accept a position as a design engineer for the U. S. Engineers with his new headquar-

Aqueduct Temperatures
July 15 to August 15, 1939

		Max.	Min.
Div.	1	 115°	74°
Div.	2	 113°	$72^{\circ}$
Div.	3	 112°	72°
Div.	5	 106°	56°

ters to be in Portland, Oregon. His work will be in connection with the design of earth-filled dams. "Si" was first employed on the aqueduct project in April, 1929, and has been in the Design Division of the Los Angeles office since that date.

Wilbert "Mike" Connell resigned from the District on August 16 to accept a position in the Street Design Division of the Bureau of Engineering of the City of Los Angeles. "Mike" was first employed in the Right-of-Way Division in February, 1933, was later transferred to the Distribution Division, and later to the statistical section of the Design Division. He is the gent who has supplied the NEWS with the Aqueduct Temperatures which appear regularly on this page, and during the construction period he assisted in the preparation of the Construction Progress Tables which also appeared regularly in the NEWS.

Another early member of the original Beaumont staff is L. H. "Ike" Henderson who was first employed in 1931. "Ike" spent most of his time in the vicinity of Banning, where he was employed on geological work, primarily on the San Jacinto tunnel. He was also safety engineer on this tunnel during the latter part of the construction period. "Ike" has recently left the District to accept a new position with the International Boundary Commission with headquarters in El Paso, Texas.

Heard from recently was Bob Smiley, who was formerly employed at the Intake Pumping Plant. Bob is now working for the Shell Oil Company at the Dominguez Refinery. One of Bob's claims to fame was the fact that he swam across Lake Havasu, from the Intake Plant to the Arizona shore and return, all of which is no small feat in fresh water.

At the time this issue of the NEWS goes to press, 1st Lieut. C. J. Brandt is nearing the completion of a tour of



Good—huh? Enjoying his underground lunch is Alex Staker, Master Mechanic at West Portal, San Jacinto Tunnel. Alex started with the District at Berdoo in 1933.

active duty with the U. S. Army at Fort McArthur, Calif. During the last two weeks, Lt. Brandt has been training C. M. T. C. candidates at the army post. In civilian life, the lieutenant is known as Charlie Brandt, head of the Mails and Files Division of the M. W. D.

My—my—how time do fly. It seems like just a day or so ago that smiling Bill O'Brien was the mail boy in the Los Angeles office. He disappeared one day, just a few days ago, it seems, to enter U. C. L. A. as a freshman. Lo' and behold, as this issue was being put to bed, in walked a serious young man and presented a card which read "William F. O'Brien, Sales and Leases, W. Ross Campbell Co., Los Angeles." Bill graduated from college this last June and reports that he is doing fine in his new position.

The Banning Record reports that a surprise shower was given on the night of July 31 for Winifred Guay, who is to be married on September 2 to Mr. Clifford Ruppel of Torrance (glad to see that she's still in the M.W.D. area anyway). Winifred is one of the telephone operators at Banning and was formerly employed in the Los Angeles office of the District.



A bunch of the L. A. office gents went fishing. Left to right, top: Charlie Brandt, his fish; Doug Fagg, his fish; Joy, Boredom and Gloom, as portrayed by Palstine, Muret and Skinner. Left to right, bottom: Skipper Keigan, he caught no fish so he had to take a couple of hitches in his belt; scenery only; "Oh, boy—I got a whale," says McKinlay.

# Insurance Drive Nets 40% Increase

As a result of the Employees Association drive for new members in the group insurance plan, George Swanman, of the Accounting Division, announced on August 20 that there had been an increase of more than 40 per cent in the number of employees now carrying the life insurance.

Leading the parade of those who took advantage of the insurance plan is the 230-kv patrol crew. Headed by Bob Allen, the Camino gang signed up 100 per cent for the group insurance.

Swanman also reported that the average age of the new policy holders is 38 years as compared with an average age of 47 years in the insured group prior to August 1. As a result of the decrease in average age, the John Hancock Company has indicated to the Employees Association that there will be no increase in the insurance rate next year, and that there is a good possibility of a decrease in the insurance premiums.

# Last Work On Main Aqueduct

(Continued from Page 2) grouting. This high pressure grouting work is rapidly sealing off the underground water which has made its way into the tunnel since the beginning of the excavation work.

To those who worked in San Jacinto headings when they were really wet, it will be interesting to note that at the time this issue of the NEWS went to press the total flow in the entire tunnel had been reduced to approximately 1000 gallons per minute. It will be remembered that at one time a peak of approximately 40,000 gallons of water per minute was recorded spurting into San Jacinto Tunnel.

It will also be of interest to old San Jack hardrockers to know that a steel cover has been placed over the top of the Cabazon shaft, and that both the Cabazon pioneer and Potrero pioneer tunnels have been sealed off. The intersection of the Lawrence adit with the

main line of the tunnel has been closed, and all utilities have been removed from the mile-long inclined adit. The East Portal aggregate plant has also been removed, taking away another landmark of the construction period.

#### WUXTRY—BIG MISTAKE

Reports from the field state that at least one local newspaper in the vicinity of the West Portal of San Jacinto tunnel is very much concerned about the "mistake" made by "Mike" Leadbetter's crews in joining the Casa Loma Siphon with the tunnel. This "mistake" being that the siphon neither hits the tunnel on line or grade (see cover picture). At last report "Mike" was having a hard time convincing the locals that the "mistake" in line is designed intentionally to allow for the future construction of another barrel of the siphon and that the drop in grade is to provide the necessary increase in the velocity of water entering the siphon. Anyhow, "Mike" says he thinks that water will flow through the transition O. K.

# Employees Urged To Vote NO On Ham and Eggs

The Board of Control of the Metropolitan Water District Employees Assocation has gone on record as being absolutely opposed to the California Retirement Life Payments Act, and urges all employees, their friends, and families, to vote "No" against the measure which is commonly known as "Ham and Eggs" and which will be voted on by the people of California at a special election on November 7, 1939.

The Employees Board of Control believes that the passage of this measure would constitute a disastrous discrimination against District and all other governmental employees. It would compel them to accept scrip instead of lawful money as compensation for their employment. Most responsible agencies, including all banks, have flatly stated that they will not accept such scrip under any conditions.

In going on record against the "Ham and Eggs" proposition, the Employees Board made it clear that it is not opposed to the principal of a pension for aged people, but that it is opposed to this proposed plan which would be entirely detrimental to the operation of



An interior view in the Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant showing the giant 12,500-horsepower motors which drive the big pumps.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Even though a first reading of the proposed act may not indicate the discrimination against public employees, a serious consideration of the measure reveals that such is the case. The act in its present form (having been partially revised since it was defeated at the last general election) states that governmental employees, which includes employees of the District, may take their salaries in the form of pension warrants. However, the act further provides that governmental organizations such as the Metropolitan Water District shall be compelled to accept the scrip in payment of taxes and for all services, (which, in the case of the District, would be the sale of water).

There can be no misunderstanding of the fact that if the District's only revenue—from taxes and the sale of water—is received in the form of scrip, then the District, lacking lawful money of the United States, will have no choice but to pay its employees in that same scrip.

#### Check Your Registration

Defeat of this measure on November 7 will require the "No" vote of every person in the State of California who is opposed to the "Ham and Eggs" plan and its accompanying distribution of "funny money." Employees and their families who may have lost their registration, either by moving or by failing to vote in the primary and general elections of 1938, are urged to reregister immediately so that they may protect their income by voting NO on "Ham and Eggs" on November 7, 1939.



The Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant with its forebay partially filled with water from the far-off Colorado River.